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(54) Method of reducing or suppressing undesirable activities of biological pharmaceutical and biomedical products and materials.

(57) A method of reducing or suppressing undesirable activities like pyrogenicity, hepatitis infectivity and clotting activation of biological, pharmaceutical and biomedical products and materials by prolonged contact with a solution or suspension from about 0.01 to about 20 % by weight of a non-denaturing nonionic amphiphile and separating said amphiphile from the resulting treated product or material by liquid phase separation.

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Method of reducing or suppressing undesirable activities of biological, pharmaceutical and biomedical products and materials.

5 Background of the invention

 This invention relates to a method of reducing or suppressing undesirable activities like pyrogenicity, hepatitis infectivity and clotting activation of biological and pharmaceutical products, including plasma, plasma derivatives and products thereof, and other biomedical products, or of products for treating them, like sterile filters, chromatographic materials, and other biomedical materials.

15 In the development and production of biological and pharmaceutical products and particularly various proteinaceous substances used for biomedical and therapeutic purposes, the problem of contamination with pyrogens (endotoxins) is ever present. For certain products, like products from human plasma, transmission of viral hepatitis, and activation of the coagulation enzymes also make major problems.

25 Pyrogens are lipopolysaccharides (LPS) derived from the outer cell wall of gram-negative

bacteria. They are toxic materials which are also known as endotoxins to distinguish them from toxic substances synthesized and excreted by the intact bacterium. Pyrogens have numerous biologic activities which include the production of fever, activation of clotting mechanisms and induction of shock.

Consequently, it is essential that pyrogenic substances be removed and that the causative bacteria be rendered innocuous by sterilization or other such treatment of the final biological or pharmaceutical product.

Prior methods for such inactivation or destruction of pyrogens comprise extensive treatment with heat, acid or alkali, filtration of insoluble pyrogens, or removal by adsorption with gels, ion-exchange resins and various other such adsorbent materials. Most of these methods are burdensome, time consuming, or destructive of the protein due to the rigorousness of the treatment.

Further background on the properties and effects of pyrogens can be had by reference to a paper by Elizabeth Work entitled "Production, Chemistry and Properties of Bacterial Pyrogens and Endotoxins" in "Pyrogens and Fever", Ciba Foundation Symposium, 1971, pp. 23-47, edited by Wolstenholme and Birch, published by Churchill Livingstone ; and a paper by D. C. Morrison and R. J. Ulevitch entitled "The Effects of Bacterial Endotoxins on Host Mediation Systems" in Amer. J. Pathol. 93 (2), 527-601 (1978).

It is well-known that plasma and products made from plasma may transmit hepatitis. Until recently, interest has focused primarily on hepatitis B antigen (HB_sAg) as the offending agent and attempts at eliminating this agent have led to widespread screening of all plasma used in transfusing

by a variety of laboratory procedures. While such laboratory screening has apparently decreased the incidence of hepatitis B in patients receiving whole blood transfusions, there has not been significant improvement in the incidence of the disease transmitted from plasma products. Attempts to remove the virus by various adsorption procedures or precipitation techniques, e.g. with polyethylene glycol, have not proven to eliminate infectivity. There is some evidence that the combination of ultraviolet light and β -propionolactone may be helpful in inactivating the virus in certain plasma products. However, there is some apprehension that β -propionolactone has carcinogenic properties.

While the development of screening tests for hepatitis B has been of limited value in reducing transmission of the disease, the identification of this virus (as well as the hepatitis A virus) has led to the recognition of a third virus which is apparently responsible for the majority of cases of hepatitis transmitted by blood plasma derivatives. This virus is referred to as "non-A, non-B hepatitis virus". Tests for this virus are not yet commercially available for wide-spread screening. This virus closely resembles hepatitis B virus but is antigenically distinguishable. Both hepatitis B virus and non-A, non-B hepatitis virus appear to have similar structural characteristics and exist as particles containing a DNA core and a lipoprotein membrane.

Attempts to prevent activation of clotting enzymes have centered around the addition of classic anti-coagulating chemicals such as citrate, EDTA and heparin. While such measures are partially effective, none of these anticoagulants are effective at the early stage of the clotting sequence which is triggered by activation of Factor XII. Activation of

clotting factors may still occur because coagulation may be instigated by the presence of phospholipids from blood platelets. Virtually all blood fractions collected today contain thromboplastic-like substances or phospholipids from platelets and platelet derivatives which activate coagulation. Administration of therapeutic blood fractions which contain these phospholipid particles may be potentially dangerous because of their ability to induce unwanted intravascular coagulation.

Recently, in European patent application No. 81401468.4 the present inventor disclosed a method of depyrogenating proteinaceous biological and pharmaceutical products. The method comprises treating said products by prolonged contact with a solution or suspension of a non-denaturing amphiphile, precipitating the proteinaceous product with a protein precipitant, and then separating from the precipitate the supernatant which contains the amphiphile and the dissociated or disaggregated endotoxin. Certain products and materials used in the biomedical field due to their non-proteinaceous nature or to their physical structure do not lend themselves well to precipitation with protein precipitants. That is, they are essentially non-precipitable by such methods or are preferably separated by means other than precipitation. In such cases, it is preferred to separate and remove the amphiphile and the dissociated or disaggregated endotoxin from the biomedical product or material by the improved methodology disclosed and claimed herein.

Description of the invention

In accordance with the present invention, products and materials used in the biological, pharmaceutical or biomedical field are depyrogenated by prolonged contact with a solution or suspension

of from about 0.01 % to about 20 % and preferably from about 0.1 % to about 10 % by weight of a preferably nonionic amphiphile preferably selected from the group consisting of substances having the general formula $RC_6H_4(OC_2H_4)_nOH$, wherein R is octyl or nonyl and n is at least three, followed by liquid phase separation of said amphiphile from the resulting depyrogenated product or material.

As used herein, the term "amphiphile" is meant to define a substance containing both hydrophilic water-soluble and hydrophobic water-insoluble groups.

The selected amphiphile is a non-denaturing amphiphile for the product to be treated. If the product contains proteins, for example in the case of plasma or other plasma protein products, the term "non-denaturing" means non-protein-denaturing. The subject treatment of the products causes irreversible destruction of endotoxins and if any destroys thromboplastic-like coagulation activating substances and substantially reduces the infectivity of hepatitis viruses (B and non-A, non-B). These effects are produced without substantially altering the activity of product constituents, for example plasma proteins.

A preferred amphiphile of the foregoing general formula is octyl phenoxy polyethoxy ethanol. Nonionic substances of the latter type are available commercially from Rohm & Haas Co. under the trademark "Triton X", e.g., Triton X-100, Triton X-165, Triton X-205, Triton X-305 and Triton X-405. Another such nonionic substance is nonyl phenoxy polyethoxy ethanol which is available commercially under the trademark "Triton N-100".

Treatment of the biomedical product or material with the amphiphile can be carried out at

any stage in the production sequence. Preferably, the depyrogenation treatment is carried out following the last step at which contamination with pyrogens is likely to occur. In those instances

5 where pyrogen contamination occurs at a production stage following a previous depyrogenation, it may be necessary to subject the product or material to a further depyrogenation treatment in accordance with the methodology of this invention.

10 The period of time during which the biomedical product or material is contacted with the amphiphile should be sufficient to cause dissociation, disaggregation or inactivation of the endotoxin. Generally, a period of from about 30 minutes
15 to about four hours at a temperature of from about 4°C to about 37°C is adequate to provide the desired dissociation, disaggregation or inactivation. However, longer periods of time are not harmful in most cases.

20 Testing for the presence of pyrogens to ensure adequate depyrogenation can be carried out by the standard qualitative fever response test in rabbits for pyrogens or by Limulus lysate amebocyte assay procedures for pyrogens (LAL tests). The latter
25 tests are based on gelling of the lysate of the amebocytes of the horseshoecrab (Limulus polyphemus) by a pyrogenic preparation. See, e.g., U.S. Patents 4 038 029 ; 4 096 091 ; 4 221 865-866 for typical examples of LAL tests.

30 The contact of the biomedical product or material with the amphiphile can be carried out by washing the product or material with a solution or suspension of the amphiphile, or by immersing or soaking the product or material in such solution or
35 suspension, or by admixing with such solution or suspension.

Treatment of the plasma protein product with the amphiphile can be carried out at any stage in the production process for destroying endotoxin or infectivity of hepatitis virus and preventing of
5 clotting activation. The amphiphile can be added to the starting material or it can be added at some later step in the production sequence.

The present invention is applicable to any non-proteinaceous or non-precipitable product or
10 material in the biomedical field which because of its intended use in humans or use in the treatment of other products and materials intended to be used in humans or administered to humans for biomedical or therapeutic purposes should be free of pyrogens
15 or otherwise sterile.

Examples of biomedical products and materials which can be depyrogenated in accordance with the present invention are :

Parenteral products such as non-proteinaceous, aqueous intravenous solutions such as, e.g.,
20 dextran, dextrose and mannitol ;

Biomedical implants such as, e.g., heart valves, pumps and plastic or biological tubing ;

Microfiltration and ultrafiltration equipment and materials which may be used for filtering
25 biological and pharmaceutical products ;

Chromatography and electrophoresis equipment and materials which may be used for the separation of biological and pharmaceutical products ;

30 Filtration, gel-filtration and ion-exchange materials, including beads, fibers and membranes such as cotton, cellulose, nylon, dextran, agarose, Sephadex[®] (cross-linked dextran), DEAE-Sephadex, DEAE-cellulose, Dowex[®] and Amberlite[®]
35 ion-exchange resins (divinylbenzene cross-linked polystyrene), BioGel[®] P (polyacrylamide gel) and

other such materials used in the separation, purification and recovery of antibiotics, vitamins, amino acids, peptides, proteins and the like substances ;

Non-proteinaceous biological and pharmaceutical products which are heat and pH sensitive or otherwise can not be adequately depyrogenated by heat or pH adjustment such as antibiotics and heparin.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the depyrogenation and separation process can be applied to proteinaceous materials which do not lend themselves well to precipitation with protein precipitants or which preferably are separated from the amphiphile by means other than precipitation. Examples of such materials are nylon, nylon fibers and casein plastic materials. Other examples are low molecular weight peptides and proteins such as, e.g., interferon, protamine sulfate and the like substances.

The process according to the invention can also be applied to other proteinaceous products like :

Blood and blood fractions such as antihemophilic factor A (AHF, Factor VIII) ; prothrombin complex (Factors II, VII, IX and X) ; gamma globulin ; albumin ;

Biological and pharmaceutical products derived from animal origin, e.g., insulin and other hormones, enzymes ;

Biological products derived from human or animal placenta ;

Biological products involved in or derived from tissue culture techniques.

Other products can be treated according to the invention, like :

Vaccines, including substances derived

from animal and microbial sources ;

Pharmaceutical and drug products in which the crude drug product is produced by fermentation of micro-organisms which generate endotoxins ;

- 5 Pharmaceutical and drug products which are processed in equipment having a residue of microbial contamination ;

- Products prepared by recombinant DNA or genesplicing techniques and in which the products is elaborated by genetically engineered microorganisms such as in E. Coli, e.g., strain K12, or Bacillus subtilis and the like. Examples of such products and the applicable technology can be had by reference to UK Patent Application No. 2 018 778 ; European
10 Patent Applications 6694 and 9930 ; Belgian Patent 867 424 ; U.S. Patent 4 190 495 ; and German Offenlegungsschriften 2 848 051 ; 2 848 052 ; 2 848 053 ; 2 923 927 ; and 2 940 525.

- The liquid phase separation of the amphi-
20 phile from the depyrogenated biomedical product or material can be carried out by various means such as, e.g., solvent washing or solvent phase extraction with a substance that is a solvent for the amphiphile but a nonsolvent for the biomedical product
25 or material. Examples of suitable solvents are methanol, ethanol, isopropanol, butanol, chloroform, methylene chloride, toluene, xylene and other such organic solvents.

- In some cases, chromatographic column
30 separation techniques can be employed in which the depyrogenated product is adsorbed on an ion-exchange resin while the amphiphile passes through the column. The adsorbed product, e.g., protein, can then be eluted from the column by suitable elution
35 techniques such as adjustment of pH and ionic concentration to release the adsorbed product.

Another suitable means for the liquid phase separation of the amphiphile from the treated product or material is by ultrafiltration. Ultrafiltration techniques are based on the ability of pressure-driven filtration membranes to separate multicomponent solutes, or solutes from solvents, according to molecular size, shape, and chemical bonding. Substances below a preselected molecular size are driven through the membrane by hydraulic pressure while larger molecules are held back. Such membranes can be tailored to provide greater than 90 % retention of a particular molecular-weight solute (the retentate) while permitting complete passage of solutes (the permeate) whose molecular weights are only one half of that of the retained species. Suitable examples of such membranes are the Loeb type anisotropic cellulose acetate membranes as described, e.g., in U.S. Patents 3 133 132 and 3 133 137. An example of a suitable ultrafiltration system for use in this invention is the Millipore Pellicon[®] Cassette System available from Millipore Corporation.

The amphiphile also can be removed from the depyrogenated product or material by diafiltration or simple dialysis. In the case of compressible materials, e.g., cotton and wool fibers and fabrics, the depyrogenated product after removal from the treatment solution can be squeezed to wring out substantially all the remaining liquid phase.

In some cases, the amphiphile also can be removed after the depyrogenation processing by heating to its cloud point and then removing the resulting precipitate by phase separation.

The following examples will further illustrate the invention although it should be understood that the invention is not limited to these specific examples.

Example 1Depyrogenation of albumin solution
followed by ultrafiltration

An aqueous solution of 4.5 % human serum
5 albumin (450 ml) was spiked with about 100 ng/ml
(tested out to be 98 ng/ml) of endotoxin from E.
coli. Triton X-100 was then added to a concentration
of 2 % and the mixture was incubated at room tempe-
rature (about 22-25°C). After 2 hours and then 4
10 hours of incubation, the endotoxin level was reduced
to, respectively, 1.29 and 0.086 ng/ml, which is
equivalent to essentially complete depyrogenation.
The depyrogenated albumin solution was then sub-
jected to ultra-filtration with a Millipore®
15 Cassette having a 10 000 molecular weight cutoff and
using six volumes (i.e., 6 X 450 ml) of the diafil-
tration fluid (normal saline - 0.9 % NaCl). The re-
tentate, which contained the albumin, and the per-
meate, which contained the Triton X-100 in saline,
20 were both found to be essentially free of endotoxin
(showing, respectively, 0.103 and 0.196 ng/ml endo-
toxin, which are not significantly different from
the 1.29 and 0.086 ng/ml levels when compared with
the about 100 ng/ml starting level of endotoxin.)

Example 2Depyrogenation of water followed by CHCl₃
extraction

(a) A sample of water was spiked with 100
µg/ml of endotoxin from E. coli. The sample was then
30 treated with 0.1 % Triton X-100 and incubated two
hours at room temperature. The treated sample was
extracted with an equal volume of chloroform and the
aqueous phase was tested for endotoxin by the
Limulus lysate amebocyte assay (LAL test). The LAL
35 test was made on the aqueous phase at increasing
dilutions until an endpoint was reached at which the

test was negative in replicate tests (reached at 0.01 ng/ml titer level). In a qualitative test, the Triton X-100 was shown to have been removed by the chloroform extraction as evidenced by the absence of foaming upon shaking of the aqueous phase. The presence of said amphiphile is otherwise demonstrated by the appearance of foaming during such shaking.

(b) Substantially similar depyrogenation and removal of Triton X-100 is obtained when water-soluble pharmaceuticals are included in the aqueous solution being treated and when any of the following organic solvents are substituted for chloroform in part (a), above: methylene chloride, xylene and toluene.

15

Example 3

The test procedure of Example 2 (a) was repeated except that the concentration of the Triton X-100 was 1 % instead of 0.1 %. In the LAL test on the aqueous phase after the chloroform extraction, the endpoint for negative testing for endotoxin in replicate tests was reached at the 0.05 ng/ml titer level.

Example 4

Depyrogenation of antibiotic followed by

CHCl₃ extraction

(a) An antibiotic sample (dehydrostreptomycin sulfate, bulk) was reconstituted in aqueous solution to 100 mg/ml. The antibiotic solution was then treated with 1 % Triton X-100 and incubated at room temperature for 1 1/2 hours. The treated sample was extracted three times with equal volumes of chloroform (100 ml CHCl₃/100 ml sample each time) and the aqueous phase was then tested for antibiotic potency and endotoxin content. The antibiotic potency was 646 mg/g after treatment versus 638 mg/g for the untreated sample (no significant diffe-

rence). The endotoxin content was reduced to between one and 1.13 ng/ml in the treated sample versus lying between 31 and 35 ng/ml in the untreated starting material in replicate tests.

- 5 (b) Similar results are obtained when butanol is substituted for chloroform in part (a) above.

Example 5

Depyrogenation of DEAE-dextran beads 10 followed by washing with isopropanol.

Cross-linked dextran beads coated with diethylaminoethyl groups (DEAE) such as described in U.S. Patents 4 189 534 and 4 293 654, and available from Flow Laboratories as "Superbeads", were placed
15 in a phosphate buffered saline (PBS) suspension (100 ml beads). Triton X-100 was then added to a concentration of 2 % and the suspension was mixed in a spinner flask for two hours. The beads were washed three times with equal volumes of the PBS. Considerable
20 foaming was still observed after the third wash (indicating the presence of the Triton X-100). The beads were then washed with an equal volume of isopropanol and the foaming was then absent on shaking, thus indicating the removal of the Triton X-
25 100. In LAL tests for endotoxin, the untreated beads were still positive when diluted 1 : 80 whereas the treated beads were negative even at a 1 : 1 dilution.

Example 6

Depyrogenation of agarose 30 Depyrogenation of agarose

An aqueous suspension of 0.8 % agarose was treated with 2 % Triton X-100 and incubated two hours at room temperature. Treated and untreated samples of the agarose were then washed with saline
35 and tested for endotoxin in the LAL test. The treated sample was negative while the untreated sample was positive both at 1 : 1 and 1 : 10 dilutions.

Example 7Depyrogenation of filtration membranes

Cellulosic filtration membranes (Nucleopore[®] F-100) were soaked in an aqueous solution containing 2 % Triton X-100 (5 membranes in 30 ml solution). After an incubation period of two hours, the solution was decanted and 30 ml of pyrogen-free water was added. Incubation was continued for an additional 30 minutes. For control purposes, five other membranes were similarly treated in pyrogen-free water without the Triton X-100. The samples were tested for endotoxin in the LAL test and the Triton X-100 treated sample was found to be negative while the control sample was positive.

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Example 8Depyrogenation of nylon fibers

Nylon threads (7 denier nylon 6.6 thread) and a roll of nylon tape (woven nylon 6.6 fabric) were soaked together in 2000 ml of an aqueous solution of 0.5 % Triton X-100. The nylon was known by previous testing to contain from 500 to 750 pg endotoxin per ml of water extract when 2.5 of thread were extracted with 40 ml of pyrogen-free water. The Triton X-100 treated nylon fiber sample was compared with a negative control of pyrogen-free water and a positive control containing 50 pg bacterial endotoxin per ml of solution. After incubation for two hours at room temperature, the negative control and the Triton X-100 treated sample were found to be negative while the positive control was still positive in the LAL test for pyrogens.

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30Example 9Depyrogenation of heparin followed by CHCl_3 extraction

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A commercially supplied blood sample collection tube containing heparin anticoagulant for

use at a blood donor center was found to be positive in the LAL test. The heparin was treated by the addition to the tube of an aqueous solution of 1 % Triton X-100. The tube was allowed to stand one hour at room temperature, extracted with an equal volume of chloroform and allowed to stand an additional hour. The aqueous layer was observed to be slightly opalescent and when tested for pyrogens by the LAL test was found to be negative.

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Example 10Thermal precipitation of Triton X-100

An aqueous solution of 1 % Triton X-100 after use for depyrogenation of a non-precipitable biomedical product or material is heated to its cloud point (about 65-69°C) after which a white precipitate is formed which can then be removed from the solution by phase separation.

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Example 11Depyrogenation of vaccine

An experimental non-proteinaceous polysaccharide vaccine containing large amounts of endotoxin was depyrogenated by treatment with an aqueous solution of 3 % Triton X-100 and incubation at room temperature for three hours. The vaccine was precipitated with polyethylene glycol 6000, resuspended in pyrogen-free water and tested for pyrogens by the LAL test. A five-fold reduction in pyrogens was confirmed.

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Example 12Depyrogenation of cotton fibers

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Cotton fibers which were loaded with endotoxin-producing gram negative bacteria were soaked in an aqueous solution of 5 % Triton X-100 at 60°C temperature for about 14 hours. The treated cotton fibers were then squeezed to wring out the aqueous solution and then allowed to dry. A 100-fold

reduction in endotoxin in the treated cotton fibers was obtained by the above treatment.

Various other examples will be apparent to the person skilled in the art after reading this disclosure without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention and it is intended that all such examples be included in the scope of the appended claims.

CLAIMS

1. The method of reducing or suppressing undesirable activities like pyrogenicity, hepatitis infectivity and clotting activation of biological or pharmaceutical products, including plasma protein products and other biomedical products, or of products for treating them like biomedical materials by prolonged contacts with a solution or suspension of a non-denaturing amphiphile characterized by the steps of using a solution or suspension of from about 0.01 % to about 20 % by weight of a nonionic amphiphile and of separating said amphiphile from the resulting treated product or material by liquid phase separation.
2. The method of claim 1 characterized in that a solution or suspension of from about 0.1 to about 10 % by weight is used.
3. The method of claim 1 or 2 characterized in that the amphiphile is selected from the group consisting of substances having the general formula $RC_6H_4(OC_2H_4)_nOH$ wherein R is octyl or nonyl and n is at least 3.
4. The method of claim 3 in which the amphiphile is octyl phenoxy polyethoxy ethanol.
5. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4 in which the liquid phase separation comprises solvent washing with isopropanol.
6. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4 in which the liquid phase separation comprises solvent phase extraction with an organic solvent selected from the group consisting of butanol, chloroform, toluene, xylene, and methylene chloride.
7. The method of any one of claims 1 to 4 in which the liquid phase separation comprises ultrafiltration, diafiltration or dialysis.
8. The method of claim 7 in which the

amphiphile is octyl phenoxy polyethoxy ethanol.

9. The method of any one of claims 1 to 8 in which the biomedical product or material is a filtration membrane.

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10. The method of any one of claims 1 to 8 in which the biomedical product or material is DEAE-coated cross-linked dextran beads.



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

0083999

Application number

EP 83 40 0011

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. 3)
D, P	EP-A-0 050 061 (E. SHANBROM) * Page 7, lines 4-20; Claims 1, 6, 7 *	1-4, 8	A 61 L 2/18 A 61 K 35/16 A 61 K 35/14 A 61 K 37/00 A 61 K 39/00
X	--- CHEMICAL ABSTRACTS, vol. 84, no. 16, 19th April 1976, page 405, no. 111640n, Columbus, Ohio, USA & JP - A - 75 160 420 (GREEN CROSS CORP.) 25-12-1975 * Abstract *	1-4	
Y	--- CHEMICAL ABSTRACTS	7, 8	
X	--- FR-A-2 348 702 (W. WILSON et al.) * Claim 1 *	1	
Y	--- US-A-4 105 650 (E. SHANBROM et al.) * Column 5, lines 6-13 *	7, 8	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl. 3) A 61 L 2/18 A 61 K 35/16 A 61 L 2/02 A 61 L 2/00
Y	--- EP-A-0 014 333 (BIOTEST-SERUM-INSTITUT) * Claim 1 *	7	
Y	--- EP-A-0 018 353 (IMMUNO) * Page 1, lines 1-7 *	7	
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 13-04-1983	Examiner PELTRE CHR.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	